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The former make millet gardens on such land as is clear of water and subsequently plant mounded cassava. Such a two-year sequence may be continued for several years, but many groups abandon cultivation after the first two years. Village gardens are also planted with cassava, and bananas and pineapples are grown. In such gardens, made on low sandbanks denuded of soil by years of cultivation, cassava seldom grows to full maturity owing to the hunger of the cultivators. Some people make an annual migration to the Lunga plain to plant millet, others barter fish for meal. Very little in the way of subsidiary crops is found beyond a little Kaffir corn, some beans and sweet potatoes. In the territory of Chief Kasoma(1) the people make a mass migration to cultivable areas in the dry season, June to November.

The Twa cultivate little, relying mainly on their fishing with which they get meal by trading. A certain amount of cassava cultivation is found here and there.

HUNTING AND FISHING

While every Bemba is a hunter by inclination, present shortage of game prevents this desire from being fully gratified. While Melland(2) records the existence of organized hunters' guilds and specialized hunters among the Kaonde these do not at present exist among the Bemba, although elephant hunters formerly were specialists. Hunting by traps and pits is neither an organized nor a specialized activity. Net hunting demands communal effort and is often carried out as a form of divination. There is little information on the hunting activities of the other groups; among the swamp peoples (Unga, Twa, Bisa) hunting is subordinated to fishing but the meat of a certain antelope (*lechwe*) was greatly in demand and these animals were hunted so persistently that a protection law has only prevented, recently, their extinction. There was a certain amount of trade in *lechwe* skins worked in designs.

Fishing is not a major activity, though fish is greatly appreciated as a relish and caught whenever possible. There is no regular trade in fish, nor is fishing a whole-time occupation except for certain groups living on the banks of the larger rivers, where there are definite fishing villages with permanent sites where fishing is carried on all the year round, and there is quite a complex system of pond and weir ownership.

Fish are caught by three chief methods: by poisoning, by weirs and by nets. Poisoning is a communal and unskilled activity carried out at the end of the dry season (August-November). Weirs are only in use in November and December before the crocodiles become a menace. Only one type of net is used, a rectangular variety, stretched across the river, at the beginning and end of the dry season.

It is among the swamp peoples, however - the Unga, Twa and, to a lesser extent, the Bisa - that fishing attains greatest importance. Here the land resources are so depleted, by the over-cultivation of areas which are diminishing in size through increasing inundation, that the growing population

(1) Brelsford, S, 1946. (2) Melland, 1923.

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widely reputed for their iron-working, when during the recent war tools became scarce. It is rarely found among the Bemba. Village smiths able to reforge and sharpen axe-blades and hoes are, however, common all over the area. The Unga obtained iron blades for their fish-spears from the Mukulu. 325

Wood-carving, highly developed among the Congo peoples, is limited among the Bemba to the simplest geometric designs, but Von Rosen noted some elaborate and rather striking carving among the Twa.(1) Weaving is unknown among the Bemba, and is not reported elsewhere. Baskets are generally made well but are not elaborate. For a fishing group the Unga have little variety in baskets and these again are simply made. A certain amount of leather-work is made by the Bemba. Both cooking and eating pots are made all over the plateau, but although they are well made they tend to be badly fired and hence to be fragile. 322 286 285 281 323

Salt-making flourishes particularly among the Shila and Tabwa, around Lake Mweru.(2) It is highly lucrative, compensates for the comparative infertility of the soil and provides a lively marketing activity. The salt is obtained by straining the soil through baskets and boiling the resultant brine. The salt-earth supply in the area is permanent and this tends to have a stabilizing effect upon villages, which would otherwise move frequently in accordance with the practice of shifting cultivation. The natural salt found in the pans at Mpika in Bemba country was also utilized and highly valued, being traded around the country to gratify the longing for salt in which the Bemba diet is singularly lacking. 317

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND POLITICAL STRUCTURE

KINSHIP

(a) *Matrilineal Descent* is one of the cultural characteristics of this area. Amongst all these people affiliation is traced through the mother and a man belongs to his mother's clan. Succession is within a loosely organised matrilineage of narrow span whereby a man is succeeded by his younger brothers or by his sisters' sons, or by his sisters' daughters' sons. These rules govern succession to chieftainship, to a headmanship, or to the name and status of a dead man by the practice known in this area as ukupyanika.(3) A woman usually succeeds to the name of her maternal grandmother and, in the case of a chieftainess, she succeeds to the title itself. Succession to a name is associated with the power to call on the ancestral spirits of the dead man or woman in question. 611

All the peoples described appear to be organized into matrilineal clans with totemic names. Among the Bemba, for instance, there are 40 or more such dispersed exogamous matrilineal clans. The clan claims descent from an original ancestress, a more or less legendary figure dating from the time of the first occupation of their present territory by the Bemba. Clan centres, in the sense of original villages of occupation, are remembered but 614

(1) Von Rosen, 1914. (2) Moore 1937.
(3) Richards, 9, 1950, describes this as 'positional succession'.